

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 87

By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Margaret Roys Stevenson of Maryville, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Margaret Roys Stevenson at age 94; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Stevenson will be fondly remembered as the first woman to hike all 900 miles of trails in the Great Smoky Mountains, logging 3,000 miles a year for 40 years, more mileage than she put on her car; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Stevenson hiked Mount LeConte 718 times, earning her a reputation for incredible endurance and an astute appreciation of nature; and

WHEREAS, even when a diagnosis of carpal tunnel at age 83 meant she could no longer hike, she still continued to walk on level ground six to eight miles a day; the City of Maryville even named a section of its Greenbelt Trail after her; and

WHEREAS, the eldest daughter of missionary parents, Harvey C. and Grace Roys, Margaret Roys Stevenson was born July 17, 1912, in Kuling, China; and

WHEREAS, in 1934, Mrs. Stevenson graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Oklahoma, where she was named the “Outstanding Senior Woman” for her many activities and academic honors; and

WHEREAS, she first became interested in hiking while working as a counselor at Campfire Girls camps while living in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Stevenson attended graduate school in social work at the University of Pittsburgh before settling down as a minister’s wife in 1936; and

WHEREAS, she enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband, William Robert “Bob” Stevenson, a minister, who preceded her in death, and they were the proud parents of three children; and

WHEREAS, people naturally gravitated toward Mrs. Stevenson's kind and optimistic nature, which inspired the creation of hiking groups that continue to meet to this day; and

WHEREAS, to honor Margaret Stevenson's dedication and commitment to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, an endowment fund was established in her name to help provide long-term funding to care for the park's extensive trail system, including the Alum Cave Trail, one of her favorite routes; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Stevenson leaves behind an indelible legacy of compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and inspiring human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Margaret Roys Stevenson, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction, even as we pay tribute to her enduring legacy as a Naturalist and public servant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Stevenson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.